



Communications Motorsport

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Difficult start of the season for Audi in Formula E

- **Daniel Abt in fifth place after brilliant fightback**
- **Champion Lucas di Grassi without points**

Hong Kong, December 2, 2017 – Daniel Abt took fifth place in race one of the Formula E season opener in Hong Kong. Title defender Lucas di Grassi, following a collision with Sébastien Buemi, remained without points on Saturday.

The new Audi e-tron FE04 cars of Team Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler left a strong impression right from the start, but fortune was not on the two Audi campaigners' side on Saturday. Due to a red flag in their qualifying group, Daniel Abt and Lucas di Grassi had to settle for grid positions four and six.

In the turbulent race, Daniel Abt was on course for a podium before losing a lot of time at the pit stop and dropping to position nine. "That was extremely unfortunate," said Head of Audi Motorsport Dieter Gass following a lost opportunity. Abt subsequently managed to still advance to position five. "That we have a really fast car is a positive," said the new Audi factory driver. "But I'm obviously not happy with the result. It's frustrating that the second car didn't start immediately – for whatever reasons. But my 25th birthday isn't until tomorrow. In the second race, we're going to attack again."

Lucas di Grassi in the early stage fought a fierce duel for sixth place with his arch-rival Sébastien Buemi. An attack by the Swiss resulted in contact in which the right rear suspension was damaged. This forced di Grassi to switch to the second car early. The reigning champion crossed the finish line in 18th place with a one-lap deficit. "Zero points is a bitter result because the car was really fast in the race," said di Grassi. "But sometimes you have days like this – tomorrow we're going to attack again."

"With Lucas we've seen a continuation of last season's duel with Buemi," said Team Principal Allan McNish. "After contact, he had to pit extremely early and, as a result, had no chance anymore. I'm incredibly sorry for Daniel. He drove a really strong race but then his car wouldn't start, which was not his fault, but there was nothing we could do either. Afterwards, he was incredibly quick again. He lost 20 seconds, in the end only lacking 17 seconds for a possible victory."

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